

Spartacist League/Britain

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20 June 2024

Open letter to the Workers Party of Britain, the Revolutionary Communist Party and Steve Hedley

We need to sort out the mess in Stratford and Bow
For unity against Starmer's Labour!

Dear comrades,

The Stratford and Bow constituency has three pro-socialist, pro-Palestinian candidates on its ballot: Halima Khan for the Workers Party, Fiona Lali, an independent supported by the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), and Steve Hedley, an independent. This situation divides the vote and only helps Starmer's Labour, leaving pro-socialist and anti-Starmer voters in Stratford and Bow with three divided options instead of a unified candidacy.

Despite any disagreements we might have with each candidate, they all deserve a vote against Starmer's Labour—which is the whole problem. Therefore, ***we are writing to urge the three candidates to resolve this problem by choosing one candidate.***

The issue is that each candidate believes they are the real deal. Workers Party candidate Halima Khan has a right to be frustrated as she was the first to announce her candidacy. But since then, on X, Halima Khan has implied that the RCP and Hedley are conspiring with the dubious group “Hope not Hate” to undermine her, an accusation that is both baseless and destructive. As for the RCP, their claim to be the only “communists” does not give them the right to ignore everyone else and divide the vote. Steve Hedley might be a former RMT leader, but this does not give him any legitimacy to run against the other two.

Such turf wars and personal competition must be put aside. One candidate must be chosen, and the only criterion for determining it should be ***who is best positioned to inflict the most damage against Starmer's Labour.*** Since we do not know the reality on the ground, we cannot make such a determination.

For those candidates who stand down, it would not be a capitulation or a show of weakness. On the contrary, this will send a strong signal of seriousness and demonstrate their readiness to put the fight against Starmer and the interests of the pro-Palestine and working-class movements ***above*** their particular name. As for the candidate selected, they should agree to campaign not merely in their own name ***but in the name of a united front against Labour,*** with the support and collaboration of the other two.

What we see in Stratford and Bow is an example of the disorganisation and weakness of the left opposition to Starmer's Labour. Other constituencies face a similar problem, like Southgate and Wood Green or Walthamstow, where the Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition and the Workers Party have competing candidates. This is intolerable.

We say the same thing there as in Stratford and Bow: get into a room, hash it out and come up with one candidate to end these useless and divisive games. Put the need for a united front against Starmer's Labour ***first!***

Comradely,

The Spartacist League